

the President's list, after all of these other new programs are created. Remember, too, that President Clinton is proposing to spend the entire \$93 billion surplus that the Social Security system will itself generate—spend it on other things.

So what did President Clinton really mean when he spoke of Social Security in his State of the Union? Here is what he said:

I propose that we reserve 100 percent of the surplus—that is every penny of any surplus—until we have taken all the necessary measures to strengthen the Social Security system for the 21st century.

His budget clearly spends the surplus, so what hidden meaning could there possibly be in his apparently very carefully crafted words?

Treasury Secretary Rubin explained to the Budget Committee that the President was merely declaring his opposition to using surpluses, should they materialize, for any purpose other than paying down the national debt until Congress and the President have agreed on a long-term solution that ensures the solvency of the Social Security program. In other words, nothing may ever be set aside specifically for Social Security.

Mr. President, I am confused, as I think most Americans are, about President Clinton's intentions with respect to Social Security. John Rother, chief lobbyist for the American Association of Retired Persons, told *The Washington Post* that many of his members are also confused and mistakenly assume the surpluses will be used to pay future Social Security benefits.

Crafting next year's budget, let alone tackling the coming problems in the Social Security system and the many other important problems facing this administration and the country, requires straight talk and straight answers. Either Social Security is first or it is not. Either we reserve any surplus for Social Security or we do not. Tell the truth, and the American people will support what needs to be done.

Senior citizens deserve better than to be treated as a political football by this President.●

FOOD CHECK OUT DAY

● Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, today we celebrate "Food Check Out Day" and commemorate the day when the average American will have earned enough income to pay for the entire year's food supply. We celebrate the bounty from America's farms and ranches and how it is shared with American consumers through affordable food prices.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, on average, American consumers spend only 10.9 percent of their disposable income for food. When applied to the calendar days, that means that the average American will have earned enough income to pay for his or her family's annual food supply in just 40 days. We commemorate this fact on February 9th, which is the 40th day of this year.

Compared to other expenses facing America's families, food is a bargain. While Americans must only work until February 9th to pay for their yearly food supply, last year they had to work until May 9th just to pay for their taxes. In addition, the percentage of disposable personal income spent for food has declined over the last 25 years. In 1997, Food Check Out Day would have been on February 10. In 1970, Food Check-Out Day would have been 11 days later than it is today—February 20.

This is made more notable by the fact that trends indicate Americans are buying more expensive convenience food items for preparation at home, as well as more food away from home.

The Agriculture Department's latest statistic, compiled for 1996, includes food and non-alcoholic beverages consumed at home and away from home. This includes food purchases from grocery stores and other retail outlets, including food purchases with food stamps and vouchers for the Women, Infants and Children's program. The statistic also includes away-from-home meals and snacks purchased by families and individuals, as well as food furnished to employees.

Mr. President, many states will mark today with an event to raise food donations for their local Ronald McDonald House. The Ronald McDonald House provides a "home-away-from-home" for the families of seriously ill children receiving medical treatment in their local areas. The food donated from these Food Check Out Day programs will be used to help feed visiting families staying at the House.

The bottom line, Mr. President, is that food in America is affordable, in large part because of America's productive farmers and ranchers. Food Check-Out Day allows us to recognize their hard work, the benefits of which we all enjoy. As a fellow rancher, I personally want to salute these Americans and thank them.●

70TH BIRTHDAY OF PRESIDENT EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE

● Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I call the Senate's attention to an individual who has dedicated his life to liberating his people and restoring his nation. Eduard Shevardnadze's career of government service is marked most significantly by his personal journey from being a member of the Soviet hierarchy to being the prominent democratic leader he is today. I am proud to have met him on several occasions and draw the Senate's attention to this extraordinary man's accomplishments in celebration of his seventieth birthday which was January 25, 1998.

Eduard Shevardnadze's career began with a steady rise through the Communist Party. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs, his ability as a diplomat brought the United States and Soviet Union into a better understanding of one another. He was a significant force

in ending the Cold War peacefully and ushering in an historic era of improved world-wide relations. In 1991, however, Eduard Shevardnadze was at odds with the dictatorial policies of the Communist Party. His strong principles ultimately drove him to forego the trappings of the elite political class and he resigned his position.

Upon his resignation, Eduard Shevardnadze returned to Georgia. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, his homeland was destabilized and struggling economically. Eduard Shevardnadze began assisting in the revitalization of Georgia, and in November, 1995, he was elected president. His policies have focused on restoring territorial integrity, as well as promoting economic and political independence. Since his election, President Shevardnadze's notable achievements include adopting and implementing a new constitution, introducing a new currency, cracking down on organized crime, and negotiating important treaties with neighboring countries to secure Georgia's future.

President Eduard Shevardnadze's personal journey from communist to democratic leader is a compelling example of the triumph of the human spirit. His high standing among Western leaders has been earned through his principled democratic leadership and perseverance in the face of adversity. I would like to express my warm regards to President Shevardnadze in wishing him a prosperous seventieth year.●

PROHIBITING THE DESECRATION OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I rise today to express my strong support for S.J. Res. 40, a resolution to propose a Constitutional amendment to prohibit the desecration of the flag of the United States. I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this resolution.

The people of Idaho have told me, quite clearly, that they feel we must take steps to protect the Stars and Stripes. By way of a resolution passed by the Idaho State Legislature approximately three years ago, my constituents let it be known that Idahoans want the opportunity to ratify an amendment to the Constitution which would prohibit the desecration of the flag. The resolution stated, "...the American Flag to this day is a most honorable and worthy banner of a nation which is thankful for its strengths and committed to curing its faults, and a nation which remains the destination of millions of immigrants attracted by the universal power of the American ideal. . .".

Perhaps nowhere is the desire to protect the American ideal exhibited better than in the men and women who serve this nation in our armed forces. As a member of the Armed Services committee, I have had the opportunity to visit with many of these outstanding Americans who serve our nation

both on our own soil and in foreign lands around the globe. These men and women stand ready, at a moments notice, to put their lives on the line so that U.S. citizens here and abroad may live in peace and safety. They are prepared to protect, at any cost, the rights and freedoms which we all hold so dear, and for which so many have sacrificed so much during the more than 220 years of our nation's history. As they serve, even on foreign ground, they serve under Old Glory, the symbol of all that we value and cherish about the United States of America. The flag serves as a constant reminder of the land they call home, of their family and friends, and of all the values that make the United States of America the beacon of liberty and justice throughout the world.

In trying to define what the flag of the United States means, I was particularly moved by the words of Henry Ward Beecher. In his essay, "The Meaning of Our Flag," he wrote, "Our Flag carries American ideas, American history and American feelings. Beginning with the Colonies, and coming down to our time, in its sacred heraldry, in its glorious insignia, it has gathered and stored chiefly this supreme idea: divine right of liberty in man. . . . That it meant, that it means, and, by the blessing of God, that it shall mean to the end of time!"

Mr. President, by supporting S.J.Res. 40, we honor the meaning of the flag. By acknowledging that the flag of the United States is more than just a piece of cloth, more than just a physical entity devoid of value, we indicate our understanding of those things for which it stands. I hope my colleagues will join me, and the resolution's sponsors and cosponsors, in taking the first step toward protecting the flag and everything it represents.

REDUCTION OF THE DEFICIT

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, during the President's State of the Union speech, as well as in the submission of the budget, there have been a lot of accolades about a balanced budget. Many of us have worked for a long, long time to see a balanced budget. It has been kind of interesting, with different people taking credit for it. The President said he has done it since has been in office, that the deficit has come down every year. The Republicans have said after they took control in the '94 elections, that is when we really saw the deficits reduce.

I would like to put some facts into the RECORD, dealing both with the President's budget and also the source of the decline of the deficit since January of 1995. In the budget deficit of 1995, submitted by President Clinton, in January of 1995, it showed that the deficit was estimated to be \$176 billion in 1995; in 1996, it was supposed to be, or estimated to be \$207 billion; in 1997, \$224 billion; \$222 billion in '98; \$253 billion in '99; \$284 billion in 2000; \$297 billion in 2001; \$322 billion in the year

2002. This is President Clinton's budget. That was what he submitted to Congress in January of 1995.

Now, you had something happen in November of '94, which is that the Republicans were elected to take control of Congress. That was the change. This already takes into account the President's large tax increase of 1993. So that is already computed in here. In spite of his large tax increase, deficits continued to increase, from \$176 billion in '95 to an estimated \$322 billion in the year 2002.

I make a point of that because I have heard several administrative officials testifying, "Yes, we brought the deficit down and did it because of that historic tax increase of 1993." I just beg to differ. The facts were that the policies showed that the deficit was going to continue to climb significantly. What happened since 1995? That is what this chart will show. We have had some tax cuts. The tax cut that was passed—actually, there was one passed in '95, but the President vetoed it. So there is no change in '95 and '96, as far as the Tax Code. Congress did pass, and the President signed, a tax reduction effort last year. This chart will show the net effect of that. Frankly, it is not very large. In between the years 1997 and 2002, it is a net tax cut of \$75 billion. So that didn't have a lot of difference on what happened in the economy.

Spending cuts over that same period of time, between the year 1995 and 2002, was \$276 billion. So that didn't have a lot. The primary difference was re-estimates—re-estimates. I am using CBO data, Congressional Budget Office data. The difference of technical and economic assumptions is \$1.567 trillion over those same years. And so, yes, the economy has done better, and the estimates were off. The growth rates have been higher, revenues have been higher. That is the principal source of deficit reduction. Again, I am not even trying to offer a lot of my own opinion. I am just trying to show that here is the deficit projection given by CBO in January of 1995. Here is the CBO deficit baseline in January of 1998, 3 years apart, but a total of a couple of trillion dollars difference in their net results.

Now, Mr. President, I would like to talk about the President's budget that he submitted to Congress. He made the statement that he did not want one dime to be spent that would increase the national debt—not one dime. Under the President's proposal, he has \$124 billion, actually \$124.1 billion, between the year 1998 and the year 2003, that 5-year period of time, that would increase the debt by new spending. And \$70.9 billion of that is discretionary spending—including mandatory, a total of \$124 billion of new spending, spending over and above what we have in present law, spending over and above what is now contemplated, spending over and above what was agreed upon last year.

I might mention, as far as the discretionary spending, last year we entered

into an agreement that said here is how much we are going to spend in discretionary spending every year. The President is violating that agreement by his submission of the budget.

Now, the budget was balanced, but yet in the budget that we agreed upon last year, one of the reasons it is balanced is because basically we froze, or came close to freezing discretionary spending. He is calling for increases in discretionary spending above what was agreed upon last year. He calls for \$124 billion in new spending. He also has tax cuts that really also would have an increasing impact on the deficit of \$24.2 billion.

If you add the two together, the President's proposal that he made in his budget and in the State of the Union, if you took the new spending and the tax cuts, which are really, in my opinion, using the Tax Code to spend money, it would have a negative impact on the deficit of \$148.3 billion over this period of time.

I am going to submit this for the record. It will show you exactly where it goes, the discretionary, mandatory—where in the mandatory spending, where in the tax cuts, the amount of those tax cuts the President has proposed. He has proposed this amount of new spending and tax cuts which have a negative impact on the deficit of \$148 billion.

In other words, if we do not do anything, the deficit picture will be \$148 billion better than it would be if we enacted the President's spending and tax proposal.

Now, to pay for it, he does provide for \$115.8 billion of new taxes—tobacco tax increases, other tax increases, and user fees. If you add all that together, it is \$115.8 billion. He has proposed spending cuts in the mandatory items of \$34 billion, and so that's how he is paying for his new spending and for his tax cuts.

So I just make mention of that, Mr. President. The President's proposal violates the budget proposal because it increases discretionary spending more than we agreed upon last year, and that's where we are getting a lot of savings. Then he says basically what he wants to do is to spend \$124 billion more over this period of time than what we agreed upon last year. He wants to give some tax cuts of \$24 billion, targeted social spending through the Tax Code, and some of that is for school construction, some of it is for child care tax credits, for environmental purposes, and so on. But anyway, he wants to use the Tax Code to spend money, and so he has \$148 billion. What does he do? He says, well, let's increase taxes \$115.8 billion and let's make some changes in some of the entitlement programs, spectrum fees and so on, and we will raise the money to do it. So he wants to spend and tax \$150 billion more than we agreed to last year—\$150 billion over 5 years. That is what it boils down to.

In other words, you can do nothing and you will have basically the same